(SEBI), for filing complaints with the police authorities for offences punishable under sections 403, 406, 418, 420 and 424 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). FIRs have been filed in 92 cases.

Air Services to Kangra

*17. DR. KARAN SINGH : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) by when the Kangra airport will be ready to receive medium size aircraft; and

(b) by when regular and satisfactory services to Kangra will begin?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL) : (a) and (b) Airports Authority of India (AAI) has already completed development work at Kangra Airport to facilitate operation of ATR-42 type of aircrafts. State Government has been requested to divert the existing Sonara-Dharamshala road and drain passing very close to the extended runway for safety of aircraft operations. Regular and satisfactory air services by airlines thereafter are contingent on commercial viability of operations.

Expenditure on decoration of petroleum outlets

*18. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the petroleum companies have spent thousands of crores of rupees on decorating the petroleum outlets;

(b) the reasons for this huge expenditure on petrol pumps;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the oil PSUs have taken deliberate decision to avoid giving dividends to Government through such expenditure;

(d) whether any enquiry is proposed in the matter; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) Modernization of the retail outlets is being done by the Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) in the context of the fierce competition that has been unleased in petrol and diesel retailing

between the private and public sector as well as among Public Sector OMCs. OMCs aim to provide a proper ambience in their retail outlets to retain existing customers and attract new customers in the wake of competition in the retail marketing of petroleum products. Accordingly, customer-friendly facilities like Canopy, Driveway, Illumination, Signages, Toilets etc. are being provided to enhance customer satisfaction. Similarly, at select outlets on the Highways, facilities such as Dhabas, Rest-rooms, parking etc. are provided for the convenience and comfort of the customers. These are commercial decisions for which the Boards of Directors of Navratna companies are fully empowered.

(c) No, Sir. The Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies have been regularly paying good dividends to the Government.

(d) and (e) Do not arise.

River Interlinking Scheme

*19. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the river interlinking scheme does not find favour from various States;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the State Government of Bihar in its report has felt that there is no sufficient water in the Ganga to support the scheme; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): (a) to (d) National Water Development Agency (NWDA) based on water balance and prefeasibility studies carried out by it, has identified 30 links (14 under Himalayan Component and 16 under Peninsular Component) for preparation of Feasibility Reports (FRs). Most of the States are supportive of the concept of the Interlinking of Rivers (ILR) programme, provided it can ensure a "win-win" situation for all States. However, some States have reservations in regard to water availability in their territory and they do not agree to water surpluses as worked out by NWDA. Some States also have an apprehension that the link proposals may have adverse effects on their existing irrigation and power requirements.